

CORRESPONDENCE

The Decline in Population

To the Editor, Eugenics Review

SIR,—In the "Notes of the Quarter" in your October 1935 number (page 183), you quote with approval Professor Fisher's view that over-population cannot be accompanied by falling food prices and agricultural depression. Surely this view ignores the most baffling phenomenon of the present day, viz. that the great mass of mankind is undernourished in the face of plentiful supplies of food. In Russia, India and China, in which the greater part of mankind live, the bulk of the people suffer from chronic starvation, that is, from such undernourishment as undermines their health and vitality. There can be little doubt that if everyone on earth had their bellyful, there would be a scarcity of foodstuffs instead of plenty. Whatever the cause of this distressing state of affairs may be, it must destroy the foundations of Professor Fisher's argument, which looks convincing enough on paper. Having spent thirty years in India, I can vouch for the truth of what I say in regard to India, while numerous books on Russia and China bear witness to the state of things in those countries. In any case Professor Fisher's argument could only apply to the world as a whole and not to any particular country.

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*.*Professor Fisher writes: "Certainly it was developed for the world as a whole. On modern conditions of transport, both of food and other products, it is ridiculous to speak of any civilized country in isolation as being over- or under-populated; compare Manhattan Island with Texas. It seems to be chiefly forgetfulness of modern transport facilities which leads conservative depopulationists to overlook the fact that countries formerly fully peopled, like England and Belgium, are now suffering from the consequences of world under-population."

To the Editor, Eugenics Review

SIR,—Mr. R. B. Kerr contends that Britain is over-populated, while you in your "Notes of the Quarter" quote Professor Fisher approvingly as saying that among the signs of over-population are the financial prosperity of the food-growing classes, and the correspondingly high prices of food, both of which symptoms are absent (October 1935, pages 183 and 259). Professor Fisher's dictum would carry more weight had he remembered that man does not live by cash alone, and that many will part with cash in order to gratify lusts of the flesh other than pure avarice. An occasional miser may starve

while hugging his gold, but most people prefer to satisfy other inherited desires as well, even though it be at the expense of their pockets. Among these inherited desires are (i) the desire to grow crops, and (ii) the desire to hunt and kill animals. Well—pheasants are edible, and the man who grows and shoots them gets a very inadequate financial return on any he markets, yet Professor Fisher would not claim that a country cannot be over-populated while it contains such sportsmen. Professor Fisher would recognize that the pheasant grower is actuated largely by his desire to pursue and if possible to kill, and that the financial is not the only aspect of his activities. And equally with the sportsman the farming population is dominated by its own particular craving, and in order to gratify it is willing to endure financial conditions which prove not that the country is under-populated, but rather how strong this craving must be.

The farmer grows crops partly as a sport or hobby, and because he likes the life; and is paid for his labour not entirely in cash, as I fear are many factory workers, but partly in cash and partly in happiness. Perhaps this is why his complaints of hard times often cause amusement. His craving for this happiness makes him break in and cultivate land suitable only for forests and catchment areas, his land hunger is insatiable, a dominating desire which continually tempts him to add acre to acre, and to grow continually more and more food for an already congested market. Consider the Zuider Zee, and the prices of the crops he expects to grow there! Whether he has his reward or not, the consequent low prices of his products do not necessarily prove under-population, but rather perhaps the over-population of the whole world by people similarly addicted.

Many people condemn and wish to check the "flight from the country." Whether it is bad for the urban populations or not, it is certainly the financial salvation of the farming population, though it may be a pity that the towns are so largely in Britain and the farmers mostly overseas.

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To the Editor, Eugenics Review

SIR,—In your October 1935 issue (page 184) you quote Mr. Colin Clark as follows: "Instead of population pressing on the means of subsistence, it would be nearer the truth to say that the means of subsistence are pressing on the population." Unfortunately that assertion is entirely erroneous.

The only statistical attempt to estimate the world's food supply in calories per head is that of the French mathematician, M. Gabriel Giroud. He

took the official statistics of food production in all the countries which keep them—two-thirds of the world—then turned the food into calories, and divided by the population of those countries, making due allowance for the proportion of women and children. The result was that the actual food supply is only two-thirds of what Atwater and other physiologists regard as essential. (See *Avons-nous Trop de Tout?* published in 1935.)

If the statistics of the remaining third of the world had been available, the result would have been far worse. Giroud's figures include those of all the food-exporting countries which have a surplus, but does not include countries like China which have a deplorable deficit.

Even if there were enough calories, that would not mean that there was a desirable food supply. Two-thirds of the human race live wholly on rice, barley, rye and other cereals, because an acre of land will yield more calories in that form than any other. Meat and milk need five times as much land as cereals to produce the same number of calories; while fruit and vegetables contain very few calories. Consequently meat, milk, butter, cheese, fruit and green vegetables are almost totally unknown to two-thirds of the human race.

Professor Lionel Robbins of London University, one of the ablest living economists, warned us last winter on the wireless against the delusion that there is plenty of food or anything else. He said: "The maximum utilization of the world's productive equipment would still leave us, on the average, very badly off." (*Listener*, December 5th, 1934, page 941.)

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. This correspondence is discussed on page 272.—Ed.

Miscegenation ?

To the Editor, Eugenics Review

SIR,—In the *EUGENICS REVIEW* of October 1935 (p. 208) a statement is given from a paper read by Professor Stigler of Vienna at the Berlin Population Congress, which your reporter Mr. D. V. Glass considered worth while quoting, and consists of biology's warning against intermarriages between Jews and those of Germanic or such dissimilar race. This view falls entirely within the general conclusions arrived at by Professor Ruggles Gates, F.R.S., in his book published a few years ago on racial crossings in man. (I have not my copy by me, and have forgotten the title.)

Lists have been published during the past year by independent sources in England and French Canada citing jointly over 100 cases involving an alliance by marriage between members of the Jewish race and members of England's nobility or titled families. The actual number of such alliances is probably considerably greater, but from

the information given this cannot be confirmed. The names of some forty-one titled Jews are mentioned without indicating of what blood their wives may be; also some seventy-seven knights are mentioned as either Jewish or partly of Jewish blood—the latter cases implying of course some previous racial crossing. The lists referred to have now been published together in *La Libre Parole*, of January 1936.

There may be some excuse for most of the perpetrators of the mismatings alluded to, as the information and knowledge acquired, which has enabled the evils involved to be fully appreciated, is only of recent years, and the natural guide of instinct was already during last century under the anæsthetic influence of the teaching of equality and "universal brotherhood," which leads to universal mating, mongrelization and decline of qualities. The lamentable consequences of these biological misalliances must persist down the avenue of time.

I suggest that the Council of the *Eugenics Society* consider sending a circular letter to the responsible heads of schools and colleges pointing out the necessity, in the interests of future generations, of instructing their pupils as to the biological dangers of racial crossings and ill-chosen matings, and the mental and physical decadence thereby initiated and irrevocably entailed on a series of future descendants.

Such a step might herald the introduction of the national teaching of positive eugenics, and lead to the day, which you allude to in your "Notes of the Quarter" last October, "when the improvement of the biological qualities of mankind will be regarded as a major political question."

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"Nordica"

To the Editor, Eugenics Review

SIR,—As a member of numerous scientific societies, the term "Nordic" to me represents a definite concept. Yet its use is quietly censored in certain American periodicals of nation-wide circulation. Some years ago, in assisting a magazine writer to find technical data on race, the word "Nordic" was used perhaps a half-dozen times in material I prepared for him. Blue-pencilling it, he said: "That word is taboo with us." Referring to the British colonists of New England, he continued: "The word 'Puritan' has long been outlawed." He cynically added: "I wonder when the hyphenates will succeed in disqualifying the word 'American.'"

Despite this experience, may I suggest to those interested in the eugenics of race, another concept: "Nordica." This might be used to describe as a unit all those parts of the world peopled mostly by Nordics. We are commencing to grasp that what hyphenates have been contemptuously calling